

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An aqueous dispersion of water-soluble polymers of ~~ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers, obtainable~~ obtained by free radical polymerization of ~~the monomers~~ ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers in an aqueous medium in the presence of at least one stabilizer, wherein ~~the polymerization is carried out in the presence of at least one water-soluble polymer of~~ the at least one stabilizer comprises:

(a) at least one water-soluble polymer selected from the group consisting of a graft polymers polymer of vinyl acetate and/or vinyl propionate on polyethylene glycols glycol, a polyethylene glycols glycol blocked at one or both terminal groups with an alkyl, a carboxyl or an amino groups and/or group, and a copolymer copolymers of alkyl polyalkylene glycol methacrylates methacrylate and methacrylic acid; and

~~and at least one water-soluble polymer selected from~~

(b) at least one water-soluble polymer selected from the group consisting of a hydrolyzed copolymers copolymer of vinyl alkyl ethers ether and maleic anhydride in the form of the a free carboxyl groups group and in the form of the salts a salt at least partly neutralized with one or more alkali metal hydroxides or one or more ammonium bases, and/or of water-soluble starch from the group consisting of a cationically modified potato starch, an anionically modified potato starch, a degraded potato starch and maltodextrin, as a stabilizer.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein at least one polyalkylene glycols glycol having a molar ~~masses~~ mass M_n of from 100 to 100000, and at least one polyalkylene glycols glycol blocked at one or both terminal groups

with an alkyl, a carboxyl or an amino ~~groups~~ group and having a molar ~~masses~~ mass M_n of from 100 to 100000, are used as the at least one water-soluble ~~polymers~~ polymer of ~~group~~ (a).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein the hydrolyzed ~~copolymers~~ copolymer of vinyl alkyl ~~ethers~~ ether and maleic anhydride in the form of ~~the~~ a free carboxyl ~~groups~~ group and in the form of ~~the salts~~ a salt at least partly neutralized with one or more alkali metal hydroxides or one or more ammonium bases, and/or maltodextrin, are used as the at least one water-soluble ~~polymers~~ polymer of ~~group~~ (b).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein a hydrolyzed ~~copolymers~~ copolymer of vinyl methyl ether and maleic anhydride in the form of ~~the~~ a free carboxyl ~~groups~~ group and in the form of ~~the salts~~ a salt at least partly neutralized with sodium hydroxide solution, potassium hydroxide solution or ammonia, are used as the at least one water-soluble ~~polymers~~ polymer of ~~group~~ (b).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein the at least one stabilizer comprises:

(a) one or more graft polymers of vinyl acetate on polyethylene ~~glyeols~~ glycol and having a molecular weight M_n of from 1000 to 100000;
and

(b) one or more hydrolyzed copolymers of vinyl methyl ether and maleic anhydride in the form of ~~the~~ free carboxyl groups and in the form of ~~the~~ salts at least partly neutralized with sodium hydroxide solution, potassium hydroxide solution or ammonia ~~are used as water-soluble polymers.~~

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein the at least one stabilizer comprises:

(a) one or more copolymers of alkyl polyalkylene glycol ~~methacrylates~~
methacrylate and methacrylic acid;
and

(b) at least one hydrolyzed copolymer of vinyl methyl ether and maleic anhydride
in the form of ~~the~~ a free carboxyl ~~groups~~ group and in the form of ~~the salts~~ a salt at least
partly neutralized with sodium hydroxide solution, potassium hydroxide solution or ammonia
~~are used as water-soluble polymers.~~

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein
monoethylenically unsaturated C₃- to C₅-carboxylic acids, vinylsulfonic acid, styrenesulfonic
acid, acrylamidomethylpropanesulfonic acid, vinylphosphonic acid and/or the alkali metal or
ammonium salts thereof are used as the ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1, wherein
the polymerization of the ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers is carried out in the
presence of other ethylenically unsaturated monomers.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 8, wherein
the polymerization of the ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers is carried out in the
presence of at least one other monomer selected from the group consisting of acrylamide,
methacrylamide, an acrylic ~~esters~~ ester of monohydric alcohols of 1 to 4 carbon atoms, a
methacrylic ~~esters~~ ester of monohydric alcohols of 1 or 2 carbon atoms, vinyl acetate, vinyl
propionate, ~~dialkylaminoethyl(meth)acrylates~~ dialkylaminoethyl(meth)acrylate,

dialkylaminopropyl (meth)acrylates dialkylaminopropyl(meth)acrylate,
diallyldimethylammonium chloride, vinylimidazole, and quaternized vinylimidazole.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1,
wherein, ~~in the free radical polymerization,~~ the ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers
are acrylic acid and are is used in the absence of other monomers.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 1,
wherein the free radical polymerization is additionally carried out in the presence of at least
one crosslinking agent.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The aqueous dispersion according to claim 11,
wherein the at least one crosslinking agent is at least one selected from the group consisting
of triallylamine, pentaerythrityl triallyl ether, methylenebisacrylamide, N,N'-
divinylethyleneurea, a dihydric alcohols of 2 to 4 carbon atoms which are is completely
esterified with acrylic acid or methacrylic acid, ethoxylated trimethylolpropane ~~triaerylates~~
triacrylate, ethoxylated trimethylolpropane ~~trimethaerylates~~ trimethacrylate, pentaerythrityl
triacrylate, pentaerythrityl tetraacrylate, and and/or triallylmethylammonium chloride ~~are~~
~~used as the crosslinking agent.~~

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A process for the preparation of an aqueous
~~dispersions~~ dispersion of water-soluble polymers comprising:
free radical polymerizing of ethylenically unsaturated anionic monomers ~~by free~~
~~radical polymerization of the monomers~~ in an aqueous medium in the presence of at least one

stabilizer, wherein the free radical polymerization is carried out at a pH of from 1 to 13 and in the presence of at least one water-soluble polymer of the at least one stabilizer comprises:

(a) at least one water-soluble polymer selected from the group consisting of a graft polymers polymer of vinyl acetate and/or vinyl propionate on polyethylene glycols glycol, a polyethylene glycols glycol blocked at one or both terminal groups with an alkyl, a carboxyl or an amino groups group, and a copolymer copolymers of alkyl polyalkylene glycol methacrylates methacrylate and methacrylic acid, and

and at least one water-soluble polymer selected from

(b) at least one water-soluble polymer selected from the group consisting of a hydrolyzed copolymers copolymer of vinyl alkyl ethers ether and maleic anhydride in the form of the a free carboxyl groups group and in the form of the salts a salt at least partly neutralized with one or more alkali metal hydroxides or one or more ammonium bases, and and/or maltodextrin, as a stabilizer at a pH of from 1 to 13.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A method for thickening an aqueous systems system, the method comprising:

adding an the aqueous dispersion according to claim 1 to the aqueous systems system.

Claim 15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 14, wherein the aqueous dispersion is used as an additive to paper coating slips, as thickeners for pigment print pastes and for water-based surface coatings, as thickeners for cosmetic formulations and for the surface treatment of leather.